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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

In Reply, Please Refer to  
File No.

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FBI REVIEW COMPLETED - 19 Aug 03

January 31, 1956

**POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS - GERMANY**

*Ambassador Felix Von Eckardt stated that President Eisenhower's reply to the recent letter from Premier Bulganin of Russia had made an excellent impression in official quarters in Bonn, Germany. He said that this was not only because of its skillfully worded contents but also because of the swiftness with which it followed the receipt of Premier Bulganin's communication. Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed the opinion that Premier Bulganin's letter was intended purely as a diplomatic maneuver to confuse and disrupt the conferences to be held in Washington with Prime Minister Eden of England.*

*Ambassador Von Eckardt pointed out Premier Bulganin's letter is a most extraordinary treaty proposal in that contrary to established diplomatic procedure the four paragraphs of the suggested treaty are an almost verbatim repetition of the introductory preamble. He said that the four articles of the proposed treaty completely failed to specify the ways and means by which the general aims and purposes expressed in the preamble should be implemented. Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed the opinion that Premier Bulganin's letter bears all the earmarks of being a sloppily composed document put together in the greatest haste so as to predate the arrival of Prime Minister Eden in Washington. Ambassador Von Eckardt said that in his opinion the Russian Government will undoubtedly come forward with new demands for an East-West Conference.*

*Ambassador Von Eckardt said that Chancellor Adenauer of West Germany has recently expressed his conviction that nothing will ever be gained by such widely publicized conferences in which the Russian representatives always manage to produce some*

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propaganda proposals for which the Western delegates are completely unprepared and which the Western delegates are compelled to reject. He said this procedure allows Russia to reap the propaganda benefits and to retain the initiative. Ambassador Von Eckardt said that in the opinion of Chancellor Adenauer any attempt to lessen international tension can be successful only if the Western nations insist on private negotiations to be carried on through established diplomatic channels. He continued by saying that when negotiations end in complete agreement on that level then an international conference between Russia and the Western Powers would serve a useful purpose.

Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed his firm conviction that Chancellor Adenauer and his party will win the general elections in West Germany in 1956 and that Chancellor Adenauer will remain in office as long as his health permits. Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed the opinion that Chancellor Adenauer has made an almost miraculous recovery from his recent illness and intends to actively participate in the coming election campaign in West Germany. Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed the opinion that in the event of the death or retirement of Chancellor Adenauer, the present Foreign Minister Heinrich Von Brentano will succeed him.

Ambassador Von Eckardt commented concerning the Otto John case. Otto John was the President of the West German Office for the Protection of the Constitution who defected to the Soviet Zone of Germany but has since returned to West Germany where he is being held in custody. Ambassador Von Eckardt said according to the best information available to him the arrest of John was due to the desire of the Bonn Government to keep John incommunicado and prevent John from furnishing the press with sensational statements and articles regarding his motives and experiences in defecting to East Germany and redefecting to West Germany. Ambassador Von Eckardt said John did not furnish any pertinent information to the East German authorities and he believes John cannot be criminally prosecuted. Ambassador Von Eckardt said he understands the West German authorities are examining the possibility of instituting proceedings

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*against John on the theory that the very act of his proceeding to the East German Zone without proper permission from his superiors in the West German Government constitutes a violation of West German law regardless of whether or not John furnished information to the East German authorities. Ambassador Von Eckardt expressed the opinion that such an approach can only result in submitting John to the strongest administrative punishment but will not suffice for a criminal prosecution.*

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**Federal Bureau of Investigation  
United States Department of Justice  
Washington, D. C.**

**February 1, 1956**

**VIA LIAISON**

**The Honorable  
The Secretary of State  
Washington, D. C.**

**My dear Mr. Secretary:**

Enclosed herewith is a copy of a memorandum dated January 31, 1956, captioned "Political Developments in Germany," containing information furnished to a Special Agent of this Bureau by Ambassador Felix Von Eckardt, Permanent Observer to the United Nations from the Federal Republic of Germany. The enclosed memorandum contains Ambassador Von Eckardt's comments on the recent exchange of communications between President Eisenhower and Premier Bulganin as well as other matters which might be of interest to you.

It is requested that the identity of the source of this information be treated with the utmost discretion so that the continued receipt of data of this type will not be prejudiced.

Copies of the enclosed memorandum are also being furnished to Honorable Dillon Anderson, Special Assistant to the President, the Attorney General, and Mr. Allen W. Dulles, Director, Central Intelligence Agency.

**Sincerely yours,**

**J. Edgar Hoover**

**Enclosure**

✓ cc - 1 - Mr. Allen W. Dulles  
Director

Central Intelligence Agency      Enclosure  
Administration Building, Room 123  
2430 E Street, N. W.  
Washington, D. C.

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